

Ultrasound Advisory Group (UAG) ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019

INTRODUCTION:

The ultrasound advisory group (UAG) is composed of a wide range of ultrasound practitioners, to cover the variety of areas of ultrasound practice, both NHS and private or independent practice. The group meet twice per year and undertake work between meetings, mostly via e-mail. There has been a great deal of change within the ultrasound community during the last year, particularly relating to work by Health Education England, which members of the UAG have had input into.

ULTRASOUND ADVISORY GROUP OBJECTIVES:

The remit of the UAG is to provide the Society and College of Radiographers with advice regarding the various ultrasound applications and the strategic direction for the profession. The UAG will offer appropriate support to deliver service improvements within the intra and inter-professional environment of ultrasound practice.

- To promote SCoR's policies, strategies and publications within the context of ultrasound to the benefit of patients, practitioners and services.
- To promote membership of the SCoR by ultrasound practitioners enabling practitioners and services to benefit from the SCoR's established leadership in medical imaging, radiation therapy and oncology.
- To provide information to support SCoR policy and strategy development.
- To develop and maintain strong links with relevant ultrasound societies or bodies with legitimate interests in the practice of ultrasound.
- To respond and comment on documents as requested by the organisation and its officers.
- To debate policy and evaluate its impact on the profession making representation as necessary.

TARGETS FOR THE YEAR: 2018-2019

1. Review UAG membership. All UAG members will have been or will be appointed for a four year term following application. Vacancies on the UAG will be advertised in Synergy News. The SCoR may also specifically request representation from certain specialities not represented on the UAG and where there are no suitable applicants. Three UAG members are due to end their term at the meeting on June 6th. It is also the time to consider terms and roles of current specialist members of the group. Completion date: End of June 6th 2018 meeting.

2. Elect a Vice-chair. This is in the Terms of Reference but there has not been one elected previously. Completion date: End of June 6th 2018 meeting
3. To advise UK Council on a wide range of issues relating to ultrasound. These may include career development, career pathways, best clinical practice, relations with other interested parties, working conditions and avoidance of work related musculo-skeletal disorders. These are given as examples only, there is a very wide range of issues relating to ultrasound that will fall within the remit of the UAG. Completion date: On-going.
4. To provide support and advice to the SCoR's Professional Officer for ultrasound. This may include working on the development of SCoR documents or attendance at external meetings. Members of the group already attend meetings of the Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme (FASP) Ultrasound and Laboratory group and the Twins and Multiple Births Association (TAMBA) working group. Completion date: On-going.
 - a. Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme Ultrasound and Lab: Jacquie Torrington
 - b. TAMBA: Alexandra Drought
5. Members may if they wish and when there is a vacancy apply to become a Review Panel assessor for the Public Voluntary Register of Sonographers. Completion date: When a vacancy arises.
6. UAG members contribute to the annual updating of the SCoR/BMUS Guidelines for Professional Ultrasound Practice. Completion date: November 25th 2018 (Commences 1st September 2018).
7. To monitor ultrasound related documents in the SCoR's document library and advise when updating needed. To advise also on content and to review drafts. The following documents are due for review/new edition during 2018: <https://www.sor.org/learning/document-library/independent-practitioners-standards-and-guidance> Completion date: End April 2018
o Other documents relating to ultrasound may need minor additions or corrections (e.g. dropped web links) during 2018. Completion date: On-going.
8. To review publications and proposals from external organisations. These include NICE, HEE, BMUS, RCOG and FASP. The list is for example only, there are many other organisations whose documents we may review. Completion date: On-going.

HOW TARGETS WERE ACHIEVED:

1. New UAG membership have been appointed, following calls for expression of interest in members' publications. One UAG member's term ended in June 2019, replacements are already in place for the December meeting.
2. A vice chair has not yet been elected. New members are joining or have recently joined the group. We hope to elect a vice chair by the December 2019 meeting.
3. Advise UK Council on issues relating to ultrasound. This has been actioned via discussions at UAG meetings or remote consultations and on-line discussions.
4. Provide support for the SCoR's Professional Officer for ultrasound. Members of the UAG have attended meeting to support the Professional Officer. These include Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme Ultrasound and Lab meetings and the TAMBA meetings, in addition to Health Education England working groups. UAG members have assisted in supporting the professional officer respond to members' queries, consultations and reviewing draft documentation.
5. UAG members have joined the review panel for the Public Voluntary Register of Sonographers, as assessors and have been involved in the development of the CPD guidance for the renewal onto the register in March 2019.
6. Members were involved in the review of SCoR/BMUS "Guidelines for Professional Ultrasound Practice" which was published in December 2018 and revisions in March 2019.
7. Updates to SCoR document library have been undertaken with support from UAG members, where their expertise is relevant to the documents.
8. Review publications and proposal from external organisations. UAG members have had involvement in consultations from NICE, FASP, HEE, RCOG, National Bereavement Care Pathway, Skills for Health National Occupational Standards and the Sonography apprenticeship standard. Evidence to support a review by the Professional Standards Authority was provided by the UAG, when appraising evidence for the bid for statutory regulation of sonographers.
https://www.sor.org/sites/default/files/images/2018.11.28_letter_for_wendy_reid_re_summary_of_the_rationale_for_the_st.pdf

BENEFITS:

Input from the wide range of experienced members of UAG have helped to shape a number of guidelines, ensure that the sonographer views are available for input into changes and provide accurate information to stakeholders.

SCoR guidelines are more rigorous due to the input from clinical and academic experts.

OTHER:

In addition to the targets set the group have had other successes this year, which include the following:

1. Increased collaboration with the British Medical Ultrasound Society (BMUS)

Following on from a range of collaborations over the previous few years, in June 2019 we secured a reciprocal arrangement with the British Medical Ultrasound Society (BMUS) to enhance partnership working and share knowledge. A member of the Professional Standards Group (PSG) of BMUS will attend UAG meetings and a SCoR Professional Officer will attend BMUS PSG meetings. The chair of the PSG attended the June 2019 UAG meeting.

2. Increasing the profile of sonographers nationally

In October 2018 the UAG initiated a campaign to increase the profile of sonography in the UK, by highlighting the role of sonographers, the extent of the work, how to become a sonographer and other issues relating to ultrasound. This culminated in the daily publication articles on the SCoR website and social media, from Monday to Friday every day throughout October 2018. Some articles were also included in Synergy News.

3. A successful study day, "Towards 2020: Sonography Education and Career Development".

A study day was held in Birmingham on 2nd April 2019 to disseminate the changes within the career structure for sonography. In addition to the usual lecture format we also used Sli.do to enable audience interaction and questions. There were 72 questions asked using Sli.do, in addition to audience questions during the event. The event was a great success.

CONCLUSION:

It has been a busy year for the UAG in terms of consultations and work with HEE on the sonographer career framework, regulation and training. The sonography apprenticeship standard and end point assessment were reviewed within very tight time frames, but have benefitted from the combined experience and opinions of members of the UAG. There has also been a number of consultations and document updates to be considered during the year.